

MISSION HAS TWO LEGS

"...(Christ's) gifts were...for the equipment of the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine... Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ..." (Eph. 4:11-15).

One hundred and fifteen years ago my father came to Korea. He was a man with a purpose. He was not a tourist; he was a missionary. He landed in Chemulpo (Inchon), and barely made it to Seoul just as the big bell sounded the evening curfew and the gates to the walled city were closing. But he managed to squeeze through. The year was 1890, and in all Korea, north and south, less than 1 in a thousand Koreans was a Christian.

A hundred years ago he founded a little seminary. It consisted of two students meeting with him in his home to train for the ministry. Today that seminary has 2500 students. The year was 1901 and instead of 1 in 1000, the number of Christians had grown to 1 for every 200 Koreans.

Seventy years ago when I was a boy, I often played on the seminary campus in Pyongyang. Back then in 1931, the ratio of Christians in the population was no longer 1 to 1000, or 1 to 200, but 1 Christian in every 50.

Today (in the year 2005) they tell me, if the statistics are correct, that there may be as high as 1 Christian for every 3 or 4 Koreans. From one in 1000, to 1 in 3 or 4. No wonder people speak of church growth in Korea as "the Korean miracle". But I am not going to preach about success in mission in terms of numbers.

Growth in numbers is important when each addition means a new Christian. But I am going to talk about success in the church not in number but in terms of a motivating purpose. The success of any congregation is not marked by how many members it has. Its success is what it does with the number of members it has, whether it is a church of a thousand members, or a church of only 50. A successful church is a church with a purpose, a church with a mission.

My text from Paul's letter to the Ephesians doesn't have a single number in it. The apostle has a better measure than numbers by which to judge success. In a beautiful passage in the fourth chapter about the church as the body of Christ, he describes its mission as "speaking the truth in love..." (Eph. 4:15). He is talking about the different vocations in the church: apostles (which literally means missionaries), evangelists, pastors, teachers. Then he turns to how they are to put their calling into practice--the values and attitudes that make the calling effective. And he does not begin with growth. That comes later. The first values he mentions are truth and love, "speaking the truth in love". And that is the best ^{description I know of} definition of the ^{'Christian mission'} mission of the Christian Church, "speaking the truth in love", and doing it globally--"to the ends of the earth". "Love and truth"--"God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son", and his Son told the world, "I am the...truth..". And Jesus told his disciples to go out and do it.

That is the Church's mission, its gospel, its good news. So I like to think of the Church as a body with two legs--truth and love--to carry to the ends of the earth. ~~Some times we forget that a real church has more than a pastor preaching in the pulpit and a congregation sitting in the pews. It has a mission--a message for the whole world outside the church doors. I like to think of our Christian mission as churches walking with Jesus into the community around them, and sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, "speaking the truth in love". Even the Great Commission in Mark (16:15-18) can be described in those two words: "Truth" is the Evangelistic imperative, "Go...and preach" (that is, preach the truth), and "Love" is the Service imperative, as in "Heal the sick" (Mark 16:18). Both are important. A~~

one-legged mission is a wobbly, incomplete mission. The church needs both, for without those two legs, mission doesn't move. It can't walk.

But in the last fifty years or so, western churches in particular have seemed to separate the two legs. Part of the church tried to walk on one leg (Jesus is our saving truth) and part on the other (Jesus said "love your neighbor"). And it didn't work. Without two legs, we began to limp.

Let me describe it this way. There was a time, back before the great theological depression in the mainline western churches when Christians didn't feel the need to re-examine or re-imagine the world Christian mission every three or four years. They didn't need to ask why they had missionaries, and what missionaries were supposed to do. It was axiomatic. It was simple, and dangerous, and overwhelmingly urgent. It was as simple as the command of Christ, and as urgent as life and death. For millions upon millions were dying without Christ. Every second saw more souls slipping into a Christless eternity. No one had ever given them a chance. No one had ever told them they were lost. No one had ever told them that they could live forever in Christ. Faced with a challenge as simple as that the Church exploded into the modern missionary movement, a race against time and against the devil for the greatest of all prizes, the eternal salvation of the human soul.

If I've over-simplified that summary description, forgive me, but that is basically the classic, and to many people the most familiar, theology of missions. It is evangelical mission: preaching the transforming truth that salvation is free for all, but only in Christ. It is the foundational message of the Christian mission. And if you are expecting me to ridicule it, I am going to disappoint you.

It was my parents' theology. The good news is true: "whoever believes in Jesus will not die, but live forever" (John 3:16). And it is the theology of most Korean churches today. Among Korean Presbyterians, it is a theology which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. But it is not just Presbyterian; it is the theology of the vast majority of

the churches of the third world. Who are we Americans to call them ridiculous? They're the ones who are growing, not we.

They are growing because it is a theology with a purpose. In fact that is also the theology which sent me to China, and from China, back to my kohyang, Korea. And it sent one of my brothers to India, and two of them into the ministry in America, and another as a medical missionary to Korea.

This is how it happened to me. One day in Princeton's Miller Chapel, the chairman of the Board, Robert E. Speer, was speaking. At one point he stopped, took out his watch, and said to us, "Young men, this watch could tick for nine and a half years without numbering the unbelievers in China alone". So I went to China. I couldn't get that picture out of my mind. A watch ticking for nine and a half years without numbering the lost in that huge country which in the next hundred years could well come to dominate the whole continent of Asia, if not the world.

Still today, that theology of the lostness of unbelief, and of salvation in Jesus Christ alone sends more missionaries around the globe than any other theology of missions. Why? Because it is true. That is the first answer. Jesus said it himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and no one comes to the Father but by me". (John 14:6). That is the best kind of missionary theology. But it is only one leg of the Christian mission. And mission needs two legs to walk.

II. The second leg is love. You know as well as I that some 70 years ago there came a day of the shaking of the foundations, the theological foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternal any more. So the missionary challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said, "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ".

It was a shift of balance, really, more than a denial--a strategic withdrawal, they thought, to what was considered firmer theological ground. Millions upon millions are living in misery and in

filth. No one can deny that. No one has ever given them a chance. No one has ever helped them to the life abundant that Jesus came to give them. This was a challenge to a future in history--a future without hunger and without hate, without sickness and without tears where all men are brothers, and all women are sisters, where justice rolls down like the waters, and the nations shall study war no more.

It gave us a second theology of missions, more modern, more practical, more "works" centered than "grace" centered--a theology of the Kingdom. In its most popular form it is a theology of liberation. It has its weaknesses. Sometimes it seems to want the kingdom without the King. But I do not intend to ridicule this view either. It has never seemed ridiculous to me to feed the hungry and to heal the sick and to work for peace and justice. Jesus who said, "I am the truth..." also said "I came not to be served, but to serve."

But again, you know as well as I how the paralysis of doubt struck once more. The foundations shook, and the roof fell in. Wars, holocausts, depressions, brutalities, corruptions, AIDS, drugs and failed revolutions--all this in a disheartening crescendo of defeat. Worst of all, much of this was happening in the "Christian" west, in what too many had believed was the Kingdom, western civilization. That kind of a Kingdom somehow refused to stay built no matter how hard the liberators tried, and the builders began to lose hope. Have we lost that leg of the mission too?

Those have been the two familiar descriptions of the missionary: on the one hand, the saver of souls, the evangelist, and on the other, the builder of the Kingdom, the social activist. The problem of missions today is that neither the evangelist nor the activist has proved to be able by himself or herself to carry the whole church together into mission. We have too many church splits. How do we learn to bring the two legs of our world mission--truth and love-together?

[[[Critics of the left still caricature the evangelical promise as too otherworldly--"pie in the sky by-and-by". And critics from the right even more devastatingly point out that the "paradise-here-and-

now" activism of yesterday's failed revolutions has given us more hell on earth than hope of heaven. But a Biblical Christian mission needs two legs, both truth and love, for it takes love to make the truth credible to those who do not believe. III

III. The answer to that is my last point in this sermon. The Christian mission needs more than the two legs--truth and love, evangelism and service. It needs a head. Paul knew that. His complete verse did not stop with "speaking the truth in love..." He continues with this all-important phrase, "...grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ" (Eph. 4:15b). What he is saying now is "The two legs need a head". They need the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. To the Philippians Paul says much the same thing, in a different context as "having the mind of Christ" (Phil. (2.2). The legs are useless without a head, for it is the mind, not ours, but the mind of Christ that can make the legs work together.

Our predecessors, the pioneers in mission and the early churches of Korea, knew that. They preached Christ, but while they were preaching, they opened schools and hospitals; they helped improve agriculture, they worked for justice; they laid foundations for the liberation of women, the handicapped and the oppressed; and the churches they planted have planted others all around the world. And all the time they proclaimed the good news: Jesus saves. For the mind of Christ was in them, and the love of God and neighbor was in their hearts, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, John 5:6), came to give power to the truth.

I think that in Korea, this gift of the "mind of Christ" to the Korean churches is most clearly seen in what has been called the "Korean Pentecost", the Great Korean Revival of 1907. Its great leader was Pastor Kiel Sun-Ju, who graduated that year in the first graduating class of this seminary. He combined to an unusual degree the gifts of truth and love in the mind of Christ. He was a flaming evangelist of the truth; but he is just as well known as a patriot, who loved his country so well that he was imprisoned for demonstrating against Japanese imperialism. He is famous as one of the 33 signers of Korea's Declaration of Independence in 1919.

And it is no coincidence that from that same first graduating class of the seminary came the Presbyterian Church of Korea's first missionary, Yi Ki-Poong. Yi Ki-Poong is also famous as the man who stoned my father, back in the 1890s when in one year father was driven out of Pyongyang six times for trying to establish a base for mission there.

III Fifty years later, a committee from America came to ask my father, "What made the Korean church grow so amazingly?" He gave them a very simple, incomplete, but very true answer. He said, "For fifty years we have lifted up before these people the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit has done the rest." III

But that was almost ^{more than 50} ~~seventy~~ years ago. ⁵⁰ Seventy years from now, will we be able to say the same? Will they ask us what we have done for Christ in mission for the last ⁵⁰ ~~seventy~~ years? I'm thinking of North Korea. I was born there. Think what has happened there in the last fifty years. The church has almost disappeared. I will probably not be able to go back. But by the grace of God, you may, some of you. I pray that in the next seventy years, before this new century ends you will see a new Korea, a Korea united north and south, and a great new missionary challenge as the barriers fall. But before you rush in, I pray for a new Pentecost in Korean and Korean-American churches, like the Great Korean Revival a hundred years ago. And when that glad day comes, I pray that some of you sitting here may be able to say, "We will speak the truth in love, and once again let the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit do the rest".

So go north, go south, go out into all the world. Walk on both legs and have one mind, the mind of Christ, because Jesus is the truth, and God is love, and the Spirit is power... and.. your mission is not finished.

Two years ago we had a surprise call. A Korean pastor whom we did not know, from the Sangdo Presbyterian Church in Seoul with which we were not familiar, wanted to fly us down to Chile for the groundbreaking of their new missionary project of which we

¶ So now I turn to you. You may already be a missionary church, some of you already overseas. They tell me that South Korea has 12,000 foreign missionaries around the world, making it next highest to the United States as a mission-minded nation. Some of you are already making this possible by supporting missionaries overseas. The Korean-American churches in this country are far more generous in their giving to missions than the average American church. So sending or going, reach out for Jesus into all the world.

Walk on both legs and have one mind, the mind of Christ, because Jesus is the truth, and God is love, and the Spirit is power... and.. your mission is not finish

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Samuel Hugh Moffett

had never heard. They told us that the church was celebrating its 25th anniversary, and wanted to celebrate it by undertaking a missions project in Chile. Why Chile?, we wondered. Well, they said, we remembered that Jesus said, "..to the uttermost ends of the earth." So our people got out a globe and put a pin in South Korea. Then they stretched a string as far as it would go clear to the opposite end of the globe. It turned out to be Chile. They found out that there were already three Korean evangelists at work in Chile, but no Korean missionary doctor. They said, "The missionaries who came to us had hospitals. So the best way for us to obey Christ's command would be to celebrate our 25th anniversary by building a Christian hospital for the Mapuche Indians in southern Chile." And they did it. It was dedicated this Spring.

That would be a good thing to think about for your next twenty-five years. A church with a purpose: a church with two legs in mission, truth and love, and with Jesus Christ always as our Head, the only Saviour for this troubled world.

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WHY WE NEED MISSIONARIES. Matt 28: All authority has been given to Me
in heaven and on earth
Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them
teaching them to do all things that I commanded you -
the Great Commission

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McH. 28:
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75 years ago I was 14 years old growing up in Pyongyang. Some people called it "Jerusalem", the city of churches. The year was 1930 and the ratio of Christians in the population was not 1 to 1000, or 1 to 200, but 1 Christian in every 50.

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That is the Church's mission, its gospel, its good news. It is a growing body. So I like to think of the Church as a body with two legs--truth and love--to carry it to the ends of the earth, ^{and plant it there}. It has a mission--a message ^{world} for the whole world. It has a purpose: walk with Jesus into the ^{world} community outside the church doors, and send your missionaries to "speak the truth in love" to our troubled little planet. Even the Great Commission in Mark (16:15-18) can be described in those two words: "Truth" is the Evangelistic imperative, "Go...and preach" (that is, preach the truth), and "Love" is the Service imperative, as in "Heal the sick" (Mark 16:18). Both are important. A one-legged mission is a wobbly, incomplete mission. The church needs both, for without those two legs, mission doesn't move. It can't walk.

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other (Jesus said "love your neighbor"). And it didn't work. Without two legs, we began to limp.

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It was my parents' theology. The good news is true: "whoever believes in Jesus will not die, but live forever" (John 3:16). And it is the theology of most Korean churches today. Among Korean Presbyterians, it is a theology which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. But it is not just Presbyterian; it is the theology of the vast majority of the churches of the third world. Who are we Americans to call them ridiculous? They're the ones who are growing, not we.

They are growing because it is a theology with a purpose. In fact that is also the theology which sent me to China, and from China, back to my kohyang, Korea. And it sent one of my brothers to India, and two of them into the ministry in America, and another as a

medical missionary to Korea.

This is how it happened to me. One day in Princeton's Miller Chapel, the chairman of the Board, Robert E. Speer, was speaking. At one point he stopped, took out his watch, and said to us, "Young men, this watch could tick for nine and a half years without numbering the unbelievers in China alone". So I went to China. I couldn't get that picture out of my mind. A watch ticking for nine and a half years without numbering the lost in that huge country which in the next hundred years could well come to dominate the whole continent of Asia, if not the world.

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II. The second leg is love. You know as well as I that some 70 years ago there came a day of the shaking of the foundations, the theological foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternal any more. So the missionary challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said, "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ".

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III. But how can we get both sides together? The answer to that is my last point in this sermon. The Christian mission needs

more than the two legs--truth and love, and evangelism and service. It needs a head. Paul knew that. His complete verse did not stop with "speaking the truth in love..." He continues with this all-important phrase, "...grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ" (Eph. 4:15b). What he is saying is "The two legs need a head". They need the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. To the Philippians Paul says much the same thing, in a different context as "having the mind of Christ" (Phil. (2.2). The legs are useless without a head, for it is the mind, not ours, but the mind of Christ that can make the legs work together.

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They tell me that in China it is growing so fast, that 6 new churches spring up every day.

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And a few months ago, the Shanghai celebrated the new huge church building for the little chapel. Hudson Taylor started there more than a hundred years ago. It has 10,000 members - the biggest in China.

Its tucked between 2 of the fastest growing churches in the world - the churches of China and S. Korea - 7

But that was a hundred years ago. ^{But new} So now I turn to you. You may be a missionary church; you may already have some missionaries overseas. But what have you done for mission in the last fifty years. I'm thinking of North Korea. Once two thirds of all Korea's Christians were in the North. I was born there. But the church has almost disappeared. I will probably not live to go back to my kohyang again. But by the grace of God, some of you may. I pray that before this new century ends you will see a new Korea, a Korea united north and south, and a great new missionary challenge as the barriers fall.

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^{So think ahead}
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New Wilmington 2008
2 legs The missionary

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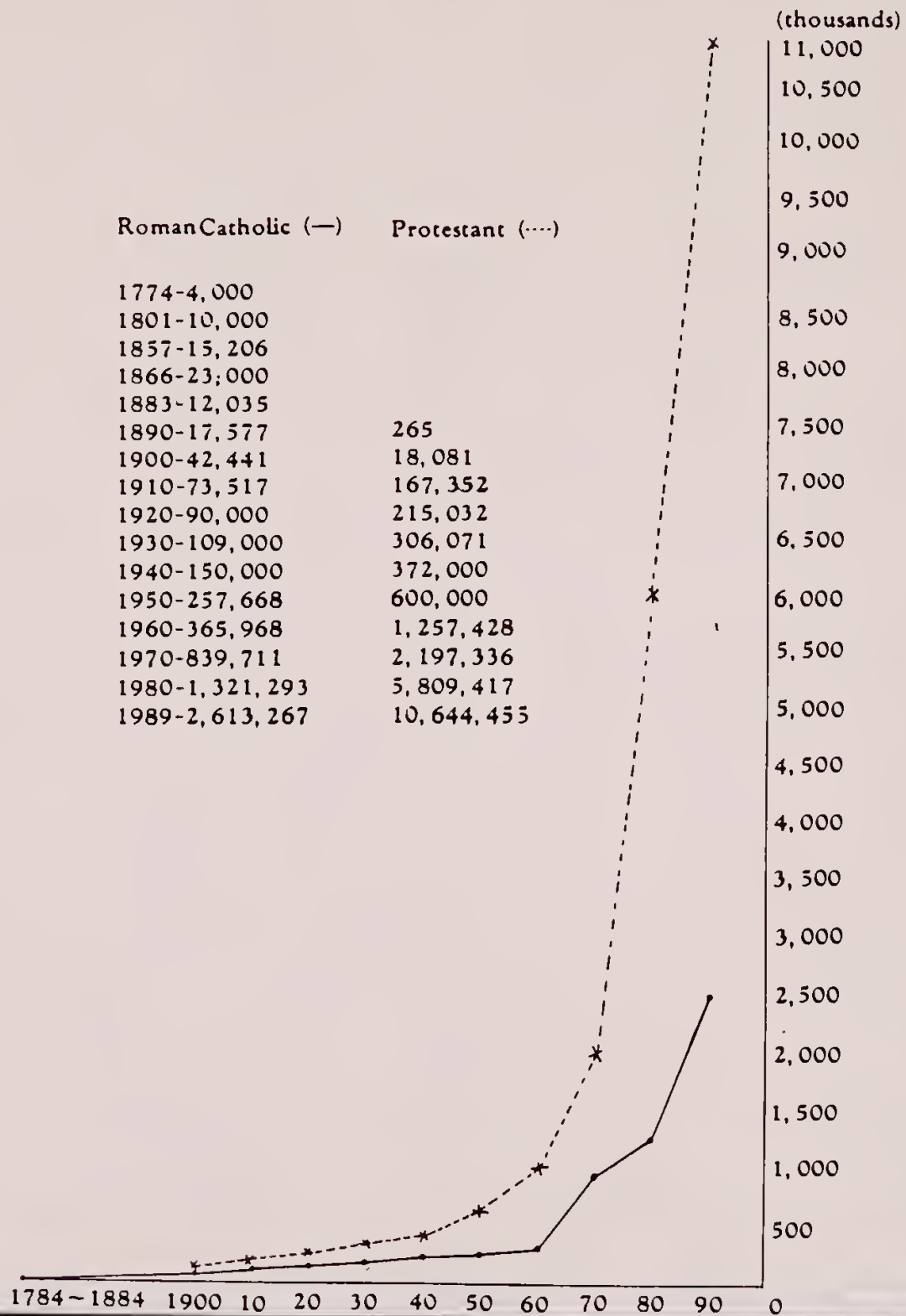
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Martin Nelson, "A Critique of Korean Church Growth (1975-1989)."

situation changes before the book is printed. However su-
 reports can indicate trends which can be analyzed and give help
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Chart for Korean Church Growth (1784-1990)



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N. W. (w), '65
2 legs. Growth -

any congregation is not marked by how many members it has. Its success is what it does with the number of members it has, whether it is a church of a thousand members, or only 50. A successful church is a church with a purpose, a church with a mission.

My text from Paul's letter to the Ephesians doesn't have a single number in it. The apostle has a better measure than numbers by which to judge success. In a beautiful passage in the fourth chapter about the church as the body of Christ, he describes its mission as "growing up" and "speaking the truth in love..." (Eph. 4:15). He mentions different Christian vocations: Missionaries (apostles), evangelists, pastors, teachers. Then he turns to how they are to put their calling into practice—the values and attitudes that make the calling effective. And he does not begin with growth. That comes later. The first values he mentions are truth and love, "speaking the truth in love". And that is the best definition of the mission of the Christian Church, "speaking the truth in love", and doing it globally—"to the ends of the earth". "God so loved the world that he sent his only begotten son", and his Son told the world, "I am the...truth..". And Jesus told his disciples to go out and speak it and do it.

That is the Church's mission, its gospel, its good news. It is a growing body. So I like to think of the Church as a body with two legs—truth and love—to carry it to the ends of the earth. It has a mission—a message for the whole world. It has a purpose: walk with Jesus into the community outside the church doors, and send your missionaries "speak the truth in love" to our troubled little planet. Even the Great Commission in Mark (16:15-18) can be described in those two words: "Truth" is the Evangelistic imperative, "Go...and preach" (that is, preach the truth), and "Love" is the Service imperative, as in "Heal the sick" (Mark 16:18). Both are important. A one-legged mission is a wobbly, incomplete mission. The church needs both, for without those two legs, mission doesn't move. It can't walk.

But in the last fifty years or so, western churches in particular have seemed to separate the two legs. Part of the church tried to walk on one leg (Jesus is our saving truth) and part on the

But that was a hundred years ago. So now I turn to you. You may be a missionary church; you may already have some missionaries overseas. But what have you done for mission in the last fifty years. I'm thinking of North Korea. Once two thirds of all Korea's Christians were in the North. I was born there. But the church has almost disappeared. I will probably not live to go back to my kohyang again. But by the grace of God, some of you may. I pray that before this new century ends you will see a new Korea, a Korea united north and south, and a great new missionary challenge as the barriers fall.

A few years ago we had a surprise call. A Korean pastor whom we did not know, from the Sangdo Presbyterian Church in Seoul wanted to fly us down to Chile for the groundbreaking of their new missionary project. We had never heard about it. They told us that the church was celebrating its 25th anniversary. They wanted to celebrate it by undertaking a missions project in Chile. Why Chile?, we wondered. Well, they said, we remembered that Jesus said, "...to the uttermost ends of the earth." So our people got out a globe and put a pin in South Korea. Then they stretched a string as far as it would go clear to the opposite end of the globe. It turned out to be Chile. They found out that there were already three Korean evangelists at work in Chile, but no Korean missionary doctor. They said, "The missionaries who came to us had hospitals. So the best way for us to obey Christ's command would be to celebrate our 25th anniversary by building a Christian hospital for the Mapuche Indians in southern Chile." And they did it. It was dedicated this Spring.

So think ahead

~~That would be a good thing to think about~~ for your next twenty-five years. A church with a purpose: a church with two legs in mission, truth and love, and with our Head, Jesus Christ, who is the only Saviour who can save this troubled world.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Samuel Hugh Moffett

5/21/05

9

Two Legs

[alternative insertion to "2 legs", p. 8. 8/09/2001]

I am thrown back, therefore, to a yet more primal level of motivation for mission: not love, but obedience. I must quickly add, obedience in love. C.S. Lewis once observed in his pithy way, "[We] do not fail in obedience through lack of love, but have lost love because [we] have never attempted obedience."¹

Of course love is fundamental, love as the New Testament describes it. It is still "the first and greatest commandment". But was love the motive in the original mission of the church?

It was love that started the mission. Yes. "For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that everyone who believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life." (NRSV). But that was the love of God the Father. The missionary was God the Son.

But surely, the Son came on his mission with no less love than that of the Father who sent him. Yes, I believe that. However, it is interesting to note that the Bible does not say so. The life of Jesus on this earth was filled with love. His was a compassion that knew no bounds. He loved the publicans and

¹ Quoted by Chad Walsh in C.S. Lewis, the Visionary Christian, (NY: Macmillan, 1981), 83 f.

sinners, Jews and Gentiles, unbelievers as well as those who believed. That is all true. But where are we told that he came into the world because he loved it? Insofar as the Bible distinguishes between the Son and the Father (a dangerous distinction, I know, and one which slips easily into heresy)--but so far as it does distinguish between those two persons of the Trinity in reference to the mission, it tells us that the Father founds the mission because he loves; the Son goes on the mission because he is sent. He obeys. The motive of the Son, the missionary, is obedience.

Look at the rare glimpse Paul gives us into the mind of Christ before the mission of his incarnation. The lesson is not love, but humility and obedience, obedience "even unto the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8). He loves the world, of course, but he goes because he is sent. That is the only explanation Jesus gives of the narrowness of his mission, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). He loves the world enough to die for it but he goes to the cross because he obeys: "Not my will but thine be done" (Lk. 22:42). The insistent, compelling motive of the mission is obedience. God is love; but it is obedience that forges and focusses and incarnates that love into a mission.

The lesson is the same when we turn to the apostles, the first missionaries of the church. Was it love for a despised and rejected race that sent Philip to the Ethiopian? Not according to the record. "The angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, 'Arise and go'.." (Acts 8:26). And he went. Was it love that sent Peter to the proud and unclean, the Roman centurion? Not according to the record. "The Spirit said to him, 'Arise and go..'" (Acts 10:20). And he went.

Was it a passion for millions of lost Gentile souls dying without hope and without Christ in this world that made Saul into Paul "the apostle to the gentiles"? He loved his own people, the Jews, too much for that, as the record shows. It was obedience that made him a missionary. "Set apart for me Barnabas

and Saul for the work to which I have called them," said the Spirit (Acts 13: 2), and obedience sent him almost reluctantly to the Gentiles. In the "strange new world of the Bible" (Barth), apostles and missionaries are made not by looking at the world in love (though that they must do), but in the most basic sense, by listening to God in obedience. They go in love, or they should not go at all. But they go because they obey.

IV. At this point most of us are inclined to change the subject in embarrassment and wish we could go on to more practical missionary matters than theology--things like techniques, and methods, and cross-cultural relations, and fund-raising appeals. How can we wait around to listen for the voice of God, when there is a whole world out there that needs to hear the good news and see it practiced.

I remember an incident back in my college days. This story, I admit, won't sound like most colleges today. One of the young women, earnest and intense, desperately wanted to go as a missionary to Africa. But God had not called her, she thought. There were no voices, no visions, only this inexplicable silence on the part of God. It was making her almost ill with anxiety. So one night a tough-minded, realistic, practical-joking friend of mine stepped in to take a hand. She gathered a group of girls together, robed them all in white sheets, and at midnight they stole into the troubled girl's room, moaning in hollow tones, "Come to Africa; come to Africa."

Don't laugh at the poor girl waiting for the voice of God. She was partly right, but partly wrong. Wrong in her stereotyped notion of how God ought to speak to her, but completely right in believing that without the positive assurance of God's leading, she would never be a missionary even if she did go to Africa. And don't rush to condemn the practical jokers, either. They were wrong to pose as substitutes for the voice of God, a temptation not unknown also among preachers and professors. But they were right that God does in his own

mysterious way, choose to work through imperfect human means. Especially in missions. That is why our theology is so important. It keeps us on the right way. We are only dressing up in white robes and stealing in upon the unwary with false guideposts and lesser challenges if we settle for anything less than truth, love, and through it all obedience, according to the Scriptures.

As simple as that. A firm faith; and cheerful obedience. If that sounds too simple for us American Presbyterians, I suspect we may be getting too sophisticated, like the professor from Yale who visited our mission in northern Korea years ago. He wanted to preach in a country church. So the mission obliged and sent him with a missionary interpreter out into the country. The professor began his sermon, "All thought is divided into two categories, "the concrete and the abstract". His interpreter looked at the little congregation-- toothless grandmothers, boys without shoes--and made a quick decision. "Dear friends," he began his translation, "I have come all the way from America to tell you about the Lord Jesus Christ," and from there on the sermon was firmly in his hands.

I vote for more simplicity in our challenge to mission:

One third of all the people in the world haven't enough food to eat. Americans feed their dogs better than that. Feeding the hungry is our Christian mission.

Half the world's people cannot vote for a government of their choice. Human rights are our Christian mission.

Three-fifths of the world's people do not have freedom to teach what they believe. Freedom of religion is our Christian mission.

Two-thirds of all the world's people are the poor. 32 million of them live in involuntary servitude; 19 million are refugees. Mission to the poor is our Christian mission.

Half of all the adults in the world are effectively illiterate. Literacy is our Christian mission.

But never, never, never forget: one third of all the people in the world do not know the only way: Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. If our mission ignores that part of the mission, it is no longer Christian.

Don't say with Doubting Thomas, "How can we know the way?" It is time to take Jesus at his word, "I am the Way, and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me." We know the Way, Jesus Christ.

We know the Way; God gives the power; all we need to do is to obey, Him--in love.

- Samuel Hugh Moffett
Princeton, NJ
June, 1994

[adapted from earlier lectures]

[[So now I turn to you. You may already be a missionary church, some of you already overseas. They tell me that South Korea has 12,000 foreign missionaries around the world, making it next highest to the United States as a mission-minded nation. Some of you are already making this possible by supporting missionaries overseas. The Korean-American churches in this country are far more generous in their giving to missions than the average American church. So sending or going, reach out for Jesus into all the world.

Walk on both legs and have one mind, the mind of Christ, because Jesus is the truth, and God is love, and the Spirit is power... and.. your mission is not finish

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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[alternative insert to "2 legs (8/09/2001, p. 8]

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[adapted from earlier lectures]

- Samuel Hugh Moffett
Princeton, NJ
June, 1994

5/20/05

Defro!

1

MISSION HAS TWO LEGS

"... (Christ's) gifts were... for the equipment of the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ... so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine... Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ..." (Eph. 4:11-15).

One hundred and fifteen years ago my father came to Korea. He was a man with a purpose. He was not a tourist; he was a missionary. He landed in Chemulpo (Inchon), and barely made it to Seoul ^{just} as the big bell sounded the evening curfew and the gates to the walled city were closing. But he managed to squeeze through. The year was 1890, and in all Korea, north and south, less than 1 in a thousand Koreans was a Christian.

A hundred years ago he founded a little seminary. It consisted of two students meeting with him in his home to train for the ministry. Today that seminary has 2500 students. The year was 1901 and instead of 1 in 1000, the number of Christians had grown to 1 for every 200 Koreans.

Seventy years ago when I was a boy, I often played on the seminary campus in Pyongyang. Back then in 1931, the ratio of Christians in the population was no longer 1 to 1000, or 1 to 200, but 1 Christian in every 50.

Today (in the year 2005) they tell me, if the statistics are correct, that there may be as high as 1 Christian in every 3 or 4 Koreans. From one in 1000, to 1 in 3 or 4. No wonder people speak of church growth in Korea as "the Korean miracle". But I am not going to preach about success in mission in terms of numbers.

Growth in numbers is important when each addition means a new Christian. But I am going to talk about success in the church not in number but in purpose. The success of any congregation is not marked by how many members it has. Its

success is what it does with the number of members it has, whether it is a church of a thousand members, or a church of only 50. A successful church is a church with a purpose, a mission. purpose. ✓

My text from Paul's letter to the Ephesians doesn't have a single number in it. The apostle has a better measure than numbers by which to judge success. In a beautiful passage in the fourth chapter about the church as the body of Christ, he describes its mission as "speaking the truth in love..." (Eph. 4:15). He is talking about the different vocations in the church: apostles (which literally means missionaries), evangelists, pastors, teachers. Then he turns to how they are to put their calling into practice--the values and attitudes that make the calling effective. And he does not begin with growth. That comes later. The first values he mentions are truth and love, "speaking the truth in love". And that is the best definition of the mission of the Christian Church, "speaking the truth in love", and doing it globally--"to the ends of the earth". "God so love^d the world that he sent his only begotten son", and his Son told the world, "I am the...truth". ✓

That is the Church's mission, its gospel, its good news. And the good news has two legs: love and truth. Some times we forget that a real church has more than a pastor preaching in the pulpit and a congregation sitting in the pews. It has a mission--a pastor with a mind for the world outside the church doors, and a congregation that will send out missionaries to the whole world. ✓✓

I like to think of ~~our Christian~~ mission^s as churches walking with Jesus into the community around them, and sending missionaries to the ends of the earth, "speaking the truth in love". ✓✓

~~So mission has two legs: truth and love~~. Even the Great Commission in Mark (16:15-18) can be described in those two words: Truth, the Evangelistic imperative, "Go...and preach" (proclaim the truth), and Love, the Service imperative, "Heal the sick" (Mark 16:18). To have a Christian mission, the church

needs both, for without those two legs mission doesn't move.

But in the last fifty years or so, western churches in particular have seemed to separate the two legs. Part of the church tried to walk on one leg (Jesus is our saving truth) and part on the other (Jesus said "love your neighbor"). And it didn't work. Without two legs, we began to limp.

Let me describe it this way. There was a time, back before the great theological depression in the mainline western churches when Christians didn't feel the need to re-examine or re-imagine the world Christian mission every three or four years. They didn't need to ask why they had missionaries, and what missionaries were supposed to do. It was axiomatic. It was simple, and dangerous, and overwhelmingly urgent. It was as simple as the command of Christ, and as urgent as life and death. For millions upon millions were dying without Christ. Every second saw more souls slipping into a Christless eternity. No one had ever given them a chance. No one had ever told them they were lost. No one had ever told them that they could live forever in Christ. Faced with a challenge as simple as that the Church exploded into the modern missionary movement, a race against time and against the devil for the greatest of all prizes, the eternal salvation of the human soul.

If I've over-simplified that summary description, forgive me, but that is basically the classic, and to many people the most familiar, theology of missions. It is evangelical mission: preaching the transforming truth that salvation is free for all, but only in Christ. It is the foundational message of the Christian mission. And if you are expecting me to ridicule it, I am going to disappoint you.

It was my parents' theology. The good news is true: "whoever believes in Jesus will not die, but live forever" (John 3:16). And it is the theology of most Korean churches today. Among Korean Presbyterians, it is a theology which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. But it is not just Presbyterian; it is the

theology of the vast majority of the churches of the third world. Who are we Americans to call them ridiculous? They're the ones who are growing, not we.

In fact that is also the theology which sent me to China, then back to Korea, and sent one of my brothers to India, and two of them into the ministry in America, and another as a medical missionary to Korea. This is how it happened to me. One day in Princeton's Miller Chapel, the chairman of the Board, Robert E. Speer, was speaking. At one point he stopped, took out his watch, and said to us, "Young men, this watch could tick for nine and a half years without numbering the unbelievers in China alone". So I went to China. I couldn't get that picture out of my mind. ^{A watch ticking for} Nine and a half years without numbering the lost in that huge country which in the next hundred years could well come to dominate the whole continent of Asia, if not the world.

Still today, that theology of the lostness of unbelief, and of salvation in Jesus Christ alone sends more missionaries around the globe than any other theology of missions. Why? Because it is true. That is the first answer. Jesus said it himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and no one comes to the Father but by me". (John 14:6). That is the best kind of missionary theology. But it is only one leg of the Christian mission. And mission needs ^{two} another leg to walk. ✓

II. The second leg is love. You know as well as I that ✓ some 70 years ago there came a day of the shaking of the foundations, the theological foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternal any more. So the missionary challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said, "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ". ✓

It was a shift of balance, really, more than a denial-- a strategic withdrawal, they thought, to what was considered firmer theological ground. Millions upon millions are living in

misery and in filth. No one can deny that. No one has ever given them a chance. No one has ever helped them to the life abundant that Jesus came to give them. This was a challenge to a future in history--a future without hunger and without hate, without sickness and without tears where all men are brothers, and all women are sisters, where justice rolls down like the waters, and the nations shall study war no more.

It gave us a second theology of missions, more modern, more practical, more "works" centered than "grace" centered--a theology of the Kingdom. In its most popular form it is a theology of liberation. It has its weaknesses. Sometimes it seems to want the kingdom without the King. But I do not intend to ridicule this view either. It has never seemed ridiculous to me to feed the hungry and to heal the sick and to work for peace and justice. Jesus who said, "I am the truth..." also said "I came not to be served, but to serve."

But again, you know as well as I how the paralysis of doubt struck once more. The foundations shook, and the roof fell in. Wars, holocausts, depressions, brutalities, corruptions, AIDS, drugs and failed revolutions--all this in a disheartening crescendo of defeat. Worst of all, much of this was happening in the "Christian" west, in what too many had believed was the Kingdom, western civilization. That kind of a Kingdom somehow refused to stay built no matter how hard the liberators tried, and the builders began to lose hope. Have we lost that leg of the mission too?

Those have been the two familiar descriptions of the missionary: on the one hand, the saver of souls, the evangelist, and on the other, the builder of the Kingdom, the social activist. The problem of missions today is that neither the evangelist nor the activist has proved to be able by himself or herself to carry the whole church together into mission. Critics of the left still caricature the evangelical promise as too otherworldly--"pie in the sky by-and-by". And critics from the right even more devastatingly point out that the "paradise-here-

and-now" activism of yesterday's failed revolutions has given us more hell on earth than hope of heaven. But a Biblical Christian mission needs two legs, both truth and love, for it takes love to make the truth credible to those who do not believe. How do we learn to bring the two legs together?

III. The answer to that is my last point in this sermon. The Christian mission needs more than the two legs--truth and love, evangelism and service. It needs a head. Paul knew that. His complete verse did not stop with "speaking the truth in love..." He continues with this all-important phrase, "... grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ" (Eph. 4:15b). What he is saying now is "The two legs need a head". They need the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. To the Philippians Paul says much the same thing, in a different context as "having the mind of Christ" (Phil. (2.2)). The legs are useless without a head, for it is the mind, not ours, but the mind of Christ that can make the legs work together.

[[Our predecessors, the pioneers in mission and in the churches of Korea, knew that. They preached Christ, but while they were preaching, they opened schools and hospitals; they helped improve agriculture, they worked for justice; they laid foundations for the liberation of women, the handicapped and the oppressed; and the churches they planted have planted others all around the world. And all the time they proclaimed the good news: Jesus saves. For the mind of Christ was in them, and the love of God and neighbor was in their hearts, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, John 5:6), came to give power to the truth.]]

I think that in Korea, this gift of the "mind of Christ" to the Korean churches is most clearly seen in what has been called the "Korean Pentecost", the Great Korean Revival of 1907. It's great leader was Pastor Kiel Sun-Ju, who graduated that year in the first-graduating class of this seminary. He combined to an unusual degree the gifts of truth and love in the mind of Christ. He was a flaming evangelist of the truth; but he

is just as well known as a patriot, who loved his country so well that he was imprisoned for demonstrating against Japanese imperialism. He is famous as one of the 33 signers of Korea's Declaration of Independence in 1919. And it is no coincidence that from that same first graduating class of ~~this~~^{the} seminary came the Presbyterian Church of Korea's first missionary, Yi Ki-Poong.

Yi Ki-Poong is also famous as the man who stoned my father, back in the 1890s when in one year father was driven out of Pyongyang six times for trying to establish a base for mission there. Fifty years later, a committee from America came to ask my father, "What made the Korean church grow so amazingly?" He gave them a very simple, incomplete, but very true answer. He said, "For fifty years we have lifted up before these people the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit has done the rest."

But that was almost seventy years ago. Fifty years from now, will we be able to say the same? Will they ask us what we have done for Christ in mission for fifty years? I'm thinking of North Korea. I was born there. Think what has happened there in the last fifty years. The church has almost disappeared. I will probably not be able to go back. But by the grace of God, you may, some of you. /I pray that in the next fifty years, before this new century ends you will see a new Korea, a Korea united north and south, and a great new missionary challenge as the barriers fall. But before you rush in, I pray for a new Pentecost in Korean and Korean-American churches, like the Great Korean Revival a hundred years ago. And when that glad day comes, I pray that some of you sitting here may be able to say, "We will speak the truth in love, and once again let the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit do the rest".

So go north, go south, go out into all the world. Walk on both legs and have one mind, the mind of Christ, because Jesus is the truth, and God is love, and the Spirit is power... and.. your mission is not finished.

Two years ago we had a surprise call. A Korean pastor whom we did not know, from the Sangdo Presbyterian Church in

Seoul with which we were not familiar, wanted to fly us down to Chile for the groundbreaking of their new missionary project of which we had never heard. They told us that the church was celebrating its 25th anniversary, and wanted to celebrate it by undertaking a missions project in Chile. Why Chile?, we wondered. Well, they said, we remembered that Jesus said, "...to the uttermost ends of the earth." So our people got out a globe and put a pin in South Korea. Then they stretched a string as far as it would go clear to the opposite end of the globe. It turned out to be Chile. They found out that there were already three Korean evangelists at work in Chile, but no Korean missionary doctor. They said, "The missionaries who came to us had hospitals. So the best way for us to obey Christ's command would be to celebrate our 25th anniversary by building a Christian hospital for the Mapuche Indians in southern Chile." And they did it. It was dedicated this Spring.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Samuel Hugh Moffett

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Mission Has Two Legs

"...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine... Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ..." (Eph. 4:14, 15).

Sometimes it is a good thing to think of success in mission in terms of numbers, and Korea is a good example. When my father came to Korea 111 years ago, less than 1 Korean in a thousand was a Christian. When this seminary was founded one hundred years ago, the number had grown to 1 in 200. When I used to play as a boy around the seminary campus in the 1930s 70 years ago in all Korea north and south, the ratio had risen again to 50 in every thousand.

When I came back to teach in this seminary in the 1950s it was 50 in a thousand. And today they tell me that in South Korea alone there is one Christian in every 3 or 4 Koreans. No wonder people speak of church growth in Korea as the "Korean miracle". Numbers are important when each one means a new Christian.

But I am not going to preach about success in mission in terms of numbers. Our text suggests a better measure. Mission walks on two legs. Paul describes it as "speaking the truth in love." "Truth and love", the two legs. So the better question is not "How much has the church grown?" but "Is it walking on two legs?". In the gospels, even the Great Commission can be described as having two legs: "Go and proclaim", and "Go and heal", truth in proclamation, and service in love. Mission has two legs.

But in the last hundred years, the churches have seemed to separate the two legs. Sometimes we walked on one leg sometimes on the other. But without both working together we limp. For the last one fifty years the world mission of the church has declined. Let me describe it this way.

Begin with the first leg, truth. There was a time, back before the First World War, when Christians in the west's mainline churches didn't need to ask why they had missionaries, and what missionaries were supposed to do. It was axiomatic. It was simple, and dangerous, and overwhelmingly urgent. Missionaries were to go out and tell the truth about sin and salvation. It was as simple as the command of Christ, and as urgent as life and death. For millions upon millions were dying without Christ. Every second saw more souls slipping into a Christless eternity. No one had ever given them a chance. No one had ever told them they were lost. No one had ever told them that they could live forever in Christ. Faced with a challenge as simple as that the Church exploded into the modern missionary movement, a race against time and against the devil for the greatest of all prizes, the eternal salvation of the human soul.

If I've over-simplified and over-dramatized the picture, forgive me, but that is the classic, and to many people the most familiar, theology of missions. It is "preach the gospel truth" theology, evangelical theology: salvation is free for all, but only in Christ. And if you are expecting me to ridicule it, I am going to disappoint you.

It was my parents' theology. It is the theology of most Korean Presbyterian churches today, a Presbyterian theology which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. In fact it is not just Presbyterian; it is the theology of the vast majority of the churches of the third world. They're the ones who are growing, not the ones in the west.

I can also say that that was the theology which sent me to China, and one of my brothers to inner city America, and another to India, and still another into medical missions in Korea not all that long ago. No, I do not ridicule it. It is a missionary theology. but it is only one leg of the Christian mission.

II. The second leg is love, service in love.

You know as well as I that there came a day of the shaking of the foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternally true any more. So the challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said, "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ".

It was a shift of balance, really, more than a denial-- a strategic withdrawal to what they thought was firmer theological ground. Millions upon millions are living in misery and in filth. No one can deny that. No one has ever given them a chance. No one has ever helped them to the life abundant that Jesus came to give them. This was a challenge to a future in history--a future without hunger and without hate, without sickness and without tears where all men are brothers, and all women are sisters, where justice rolls down like the waters, and the nations shall study war no more.

This is the second theology of missions, more modern, more practical, more "works" centered than "grace" centered, more love centered than truth centered, a "love your neighbor" theology--a theology of the Kingdom. In its most popular form it is a theology of liberation. It has its weaknesses. Sometimes it seems to want the kingdom without the King. But I do not intend to ridicule this view either. It has never seemed ridiculous to me to feed the hungry and to heal the sick and to work for peace and justice. Jesus who said, "I am the..truth..." also said "I am the life".

But again, you know as well as I how the paralysis of doubt struck once more. The foundations shook, and the roof fell in. Wars, holocausts, depressions, brutalities, corruptions, AIDS, drugs and failed revolutions--all this in a disheartening crescendo of defeat. Worst of all, much of this was happening in the "Christian" west, in what too many had believed was the Kingdom, western civilization. That kind of a Kingdom somehow

refused to stay built no matter how hard the liberators tried, and the builders began to lose hope. Have we lost that leg of the mission too?

Those have been the two familiar descriptions of the missionary: on the one hand, the saver of souls, the evangelist, and on the other, the builder of the Kingdom, the social activist. The problem of missions today is that neither the evangelist nor the activist has proved to be able by himself or herself to carry the whole church together into mission.

[[Critics of the left still caricature the evangelical promise as "pie in the sky by-and-by", and critics from the right even more devastatingly point out that the "paradise-here-and-now" activism of yesterday's failed revolutions has given us more hell on earth than hope of heaven.]] But a Biblical Christian mission needs two legs, both legs.

Our father and forefathers in the missions and in the churches of Korea knew that. While they preached, they opened schools and hospitals; they laid foundations for the liberation of women and the oppressed; and the churches they planted have planted others all around the world. The two legs.

III. How can we bring the two legs together so that the whole world mission can walk without limping. That is a the question leads me to make a third point. The Christian mission needs not just two legs; it needs a head. What is a body without a head?

Our text, after its command to "speak the truth in love", adds, "we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ" (Eph. 4:15b). To the Philippians Paul speaks of it as "having the mind of Christ" (Phil. (2.2)). Two legs, but this third point is the most important point of all in Christian mission: Jesus Christ is the church's Head, and the mission must have the mind of its head when it goes out in mission.

In a way, I think "the mind of Christ" was impressed into the Korean churches most clearly in the early days in 1907. The Great Korean Revival of 1907 has been called "the Korean

Pentecost". It brought the power of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth and love, the "mind of Christ", in a new way into both church and mission in Korea. Thirty years or so later Korean Christians celebrated the 50th anniversary of Protestant missions in Korea. A group of Americans came to ask my father, "What made the Korean church grow. He gave them a very simple, but very true answer. He said, "For fifty years we have lifted up before these people the word of God, and the Holy Spirit did the rest." If we don't begin with the mind of Christ through the Holy Spirit, Christian mission doesn't really begin at all.

That was fifty years ago. What about fifty years from now? Will there still be the same growth?. Will we still be able to give the same answer? I was born in North Korea. There is a good chance that I will not live long enough to go back there. But you may. You can be the two legs. Go to preach, and go to love; go to evangelize, and go to serve. And my prayer is that as the Holy Spirit came in power at Pentecost, and as the Spirit came in power again in the Great Revival, you will see ast century,--I pray that before this new century ends, you will see a new Korea, no longer two one, and that you will be able to say again, to north and to south, "For fifty years we have lifted up before the people the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit has done the rest".

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Samuel Hugh Moffett

If this is still too long - I will omit the lines between double brackets [] - and can use one [] -

1840 - 1 in 1000
 1900 - 1 in 200 - a Seminary
 1930s - 1 in 50
 2000 - 1 in 3 or 4

Two Legs

MISSION HAS TWO LEGS

250 (1890)
 16 (2000)

"... (Christ's) gifts were... for the equipment of the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ... so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine... Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ..." (Eph. 4:11-15).

One hundred and ¹¹³eleven years ago my father came to Korea. He landed in Chemulpo (Inchon), and barely made it to Seoul as the big bell sounded the evening curfew and the gates to the walled city were closing. But he managed to squeeze through. The year was 1890, and in all Korea, north and south, less than 1 in a thousand Koreans was a Christian.

A hundred years ago he founded a little seminary. It consisted of two students meeting with him in his home to train for the ministry. That is what we celebrate here today, and what a privilege it is to be a part of this centennial anniversary. The year was 1901 and instead of 1 in 1000, the number of Christians had grown to 1 ⁱⁿ every 200 Koreans.

Seventy years ago, when I was a boy, I often played on the seminary campus in Pyongyang, little dreaming that I would have this wonderful experience of coming back for a part in the seminary's 100th birthday. Back then in 1931, the ratio of Christians in the population was ~~no longer 1 to 1000, or 1 to 200,~~ but 1 Christian in every 50.

Today (in the year 2001) they tell me, if the statistics are correct, that the ^{ratio} may be as high as 1 Christian in every 3 or 4 Koreans. From one in 1000, to 1 in 3 or 4. No wonder people speak of church growth in Korea as "the Korean miracle". And ~~growth at~~ ^{has grown} the seminary, from 2 to about 2,500.

So success, I think
 say the church is the
 mission, is true.

Those are good reasons for us to celebrate on our hundredth anniversary. But I am not going to preach about success in mission in terms of numbers. Growth in numbers is important when each addition means a new Christian.

But my text, Ephesians 4:15 doesn't have a single number in it.

100

Growth in numbers is important when each addition means a new Christian. ^{But}

My text ^{from} ~~from Paul's letter to the Ephesians~~ ^{doesn't} have a single number in it. The apostle ^{has} a better measure than numbers by which to judge success. In a beautiful passage in the fourth chapter about ^{building up} the church as the body of Christ, he describes its mission as "speaking the truth in love..." (Eph. 4:15). He is talking about the different vocations in the church: ^{and first he lists} apostles (which literally means missionaries), prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers. Then he turns to how they are to ^{be missionaries} put their calling into practice - ^{the values and attitudes} that make the ^{calling} effective. And he does not begin with growth. That comes later. The first values he mentions are truth and love, "speaking the truth in love". ^{To put it a little differently, I think he is saying:}

Mission has two legs. ^{Truth and love} Even the Great Commission in Mark (16:15-18) can be described in those two words: Truth, ^{the} Evangelistic imperative, "Go...and preach" (^{preach what - the good news - the good news,} ~~proclaim the truth~~); and Love, ^{is} the Service imperative, "Heal the sick" (Mark 16:18). ^{feed the poor, but the captive love - the truth and the love, kingdom & service -} To have a Christian mission, the church needs both, for without those two legs mission doesn't move.

But in the last fifty years or so, western churches in particular have seemed to separate the two legs. Part of the church ^{has} tried to walk on one leg, and part on the other. And it ^{didn't} work. Without two legs, we began ^{to} limp.

Let me describe ^{the separation of truth & love} it this way. There was a time, back before the great theological depression in the mainline western churches when Christians didn't feel the need to re-examine or re-imagine the world Christian mission every three or four years. They didn't need to ask why they had missionaries, and what missionaries were supposed to do. It was axiomatic. It was simple, and dangerous, and overwhelmingly urgent. It was as simple as the command of Christ, and as urgent as life and death. For millions upon millions were dying without Christ. Every second saw more souls slipping into a Christless eternity. No one had ever given them a chance. No one had ever told them they

A theology of dependence
A mission of obedient self-reliance.

3

were lost. No one had ever told them that they could live forever in Christ. Faced with a challenge as simple as that the Church exploded into the modern missionary movement, a race against time and against the devil for the greatest of all prizes, the eternal salvation of the human soul.

^{That's an over-simplification, of course}
~~If I've over-simplified that summary description,~~
forgive me, but ^{it} ~~that~~ is basically the classic, and to many people the most familiar, theology of missions. ^{put it} It is evangelical mission: preaching the transforming truth that salvation is free for all, but only in Christ. It is the foundational message of the Christian mission. And if you are expecting me to ridicule it, I am going to disappoint you.

It was my parents' theology, ^{and it} ~~The good news~~ is true: "whoever believes in Jesus will not die, but live forever" (John 3:16). And it is the theology of most Korean churches today.

Among Korean Presbyterians, it is a theology which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. But it is not just Presbyterian; it is the theology of the vast majority of the churches of the third world. Who are we Americans to call them ridiculous? They're the ones who are growing, not we.

In fact that is also the theology which sent me to China, then back to Korea, and sent one of my brothers to India, and two of them into the ministry in America, and another as a medical missionary to Korea. This is how it happened to me. One day in Princeton's Miller Chapel, the chairman of the Board, Robert E. Speer, was speaking. At one point he stopped, took out his watch, and said to us, "Young men, this watch could tick for nine and a half years without numbering the unbelievers in China alone". So I went to China. I couldn't get that picture out of my mind. Nine and a half years without numbering the lost in that huge country which in ^{this century} ~~the next~~ ^{might} ~~hundred years~~ could well come to dominate the whole continent of Asia, if not the world.

Still today, that theology of the lostness of unbelief, and of salvation in Jesus Christ alone sends more missionaries

- 1. Christ -
- 2. Bible
- 3. Prayer supported.
- 1. Catechism
- 2. Bible study
- 3. Kim Sam H.

around the globe than any other theology of missions. Why? Because it is true. ^{It is} ~~That is the first~~ answer. Jesus said it himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and no one comes to the Father but by me". (John 14:6). ~~That is~~ ^{is the truth - True Biblical Doctrine.} The best kind of missionary theology ^{if it expects} but it is only one leg of the Christian mission. And mission needs another leg ^{behind - pulpit} to walk, ~~not just stand~~ ^{and preach.}

II. The second leg is love. You know as well as I that some 70 years ago there came a day of the shaking of the foundations, the theological foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternal any more. So the missionary challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said, "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ".

It was a shift of balance, really, more than a denial-- a strategic withdrawal, they thought, to what was considered firmer theological ground. Millions upon millions are living in misery and in filth. No one can deny that. No one has ever given them a chance. No one has ever helped them to the life abundant that Jesus came to give them. This was a challenge to a future in history--a future without hunger and without hate, without sickness and without tears where all men are brothers, and all women are sisters, where justice rolls down like the waters, and the nations shall study war no more.

It gave us a second theology of missions, more modern, more practical, more "works" centered than "grace" centered--a theology of the Kingdom. In its most popular form it is a theology of liberation. It has its weaknesses. Sometimes it seems to want the kingdom without the King. But I do not intend to ridicule this view either. It has never seemed ridiculous to me to feed the hungry and to heal the sick and to work for peace and justice. Jesus who said, "I am the truth..." also said "I came not to be served, but to serve."

But again, you know as well as I how the paralysis of ^{doubt}

doubt struck once more. The foundations shook, and the roof fell in. Wars, holocausts, depressions, brutalities, corruptions, AIDS, drugs and failed revolutions--all this in a disheartening crescendo of defeat. Worst of all, much of this was happening in the "Christian" west, in what too many had believed was the Kingdom, western civilization. That kind of a Kingdom somehow refused to stay built no matter how hard the liberators tried, and the builders began to lose hope. Have we lost that leg of the mission too?

Those have been the two familiar descriptions of the missionary: on the one hand, the saver of souls, the evangelist, and on the other, the builder of the Kingdom, the social activist. The problem of missions today is that neither the evangelist nor the activist has proved to be able by himself or herself to carry the whole church together into mission. Critics of the left still caricature the evangelical promise as too otherworldly--"pie in the sky by-and-by". And critics from the right even more devastatingly point out that the "paradise-here-and-now" activism of yesterday's failed revolutions has given us more hell on earth than hope of heaven. But a Biblical Christian mission needs two legs, both truth and love, for it takes love to make the truth credible to those who do not believe. ^{But} How do we learn to bring the two legs together?

III. The answer to that is my last point in this sermon. The Christian mission needs more than the two legs--truth and love, evangelism and service. It needs a head. Paul knew that. His complete verse did not stop with "speaking the truth in love..." He continues with this all-important phrase, "... grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ" (Eph. 4:15b). What he is saying now is "The two legs need a head". They need the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. To the Philippians Paul says much the same thing, (in a different context) as "having the mind of Christ" (Phil. (2.2). The legs are useless without a head, for it is the mind, not ours, but the mind of Christ that can make the legs work together.

Our predecessors, ~~the pioneers in mission and in the churches of Korea~~, knew that. They preached Christ, but while they were preaching, they opened schools and hospitals; they helped improve agriculture, they worked for justice; they laid foundations for the liberation of women, the handicapped and the oppressed; and the churches they planted have planted others all around the world. And all the time they proclaimed the good news: Jesus saves. For the mind of Christ was in them, and the love of God and neighbor was in their hearts, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17, John 5:6), came to give power to the truth.

I think that in Korea, this gift of the "mind of Christ" to the Korean churches is most clearly seen in what has been called the "Korean Pentecost", the Great Korean Revival of 1907. It's great leader was Pastor Kiel Sun-Ju, who graduated that year in the first graduating class of this seminary. He combined to an unusual degree the gifts of truth and love in the mind of Christ. He was a flaming evangelist of the truth; but he is just as well known as a patriot, who loved his country so well that he was imprisoned for demonstrating against Japanese imperialism. He is famous as one of the 33 signers of Korea's Declaration of Independence in 1919. And it is no coincidence that from that same first graduating class of this seminary came the Presbyterian Church of Korea's first missionary, Yi Ki-Poong.

Yi Ki-Poong is also famous as the man who stoned my father, back in the 1890s when in one year father was driven out of Pyongyang six times for trying to establish a base for mission there. Fifty years later, a committee from America came to ask my father, "What made the Korean church grow so amazingly?" He gave them a very simple, incomplete, but very true answer. He said, "For fifty years we have lifted up before these people the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit has done the rest."

But ~~that was almost seventy years ago~~. Fifty years from now, ^{what} will we be able to say ~~the same?~~ ^{when they} Will they ask us ^{if} what we ~~have~~ ^{those} done for Christ in mission for fifty years? ^{Will we have to know} I'm thinking ^{and say -}

Today it is these younger churches in Korea, China, India - in Asia; Brazil in Latin America, who are sending out more and more missionaries around the world - while the old great centers of mission, America, England, Germany are sending fewer and fewer. More than half of all the Christians in the world are not from the West any longer - but from the 3rd world. Soon they will have more than half the Christians.

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of North Korea. I was born there. Think what has happened there in the last fifty years. The church has almost disappeared. I will probably not be able to go back. But by the grace of God, *The day & the mission are* you may, some of you. I pray that in the next fifty years, before this new century ends you will see a new Korea, a Korea united north and south, and a great new missionary challenge as the barriers fall. And before you rush in, I pray for a new Pentecost in Korea, like Jerusalem 2000 years ago, like the Great Korean Revival. And when that glad day comes, I pray that some of you sitting here may be able to say, "We will speak the truth in love, and once again let the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit do the rest".

So go north, go south, go out into all the world. Walk on both legs, and have one mind, the mind of Christ, because Jesus is the truth, and God is love, and the Spirit is power... and.. your mission is not finished. *... follow us*

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Samuel Hugh Moffett

16 ?

In terms we have used much - a Biblical; New Testament mission - has a theology of dependence empowering a mission of obedient self-reliance.

A third to a half of all the world's people go to bed hungry every night. Feeding the hungry is a Christian mission.

Most of the world's people are sick and in pain. Healing is a Christian mission. Jesus said, "Preach the kingdom of God and...heal the sick. (Luke 9:2).

Half of the world's people cannot read or write. Literacy and Bible translation is a Christian mission. "Teach them", said Jesus. Matthew 26:20).

More than half of the world's people suffer from injustice and oppression. The never-ending struggle for human rights is a Christian mission. "The Lord..executes justice for the oppress; [He] sets the prisoner free", says the Psalmist. (Psalm 146)

The whole world today, they tell us, teeters on the brink of instant, total and unprecedented physical destruction. The making of peace in a warring world is a Christian mission. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God", said Jesus. (Matt. 5:9)

But ^{wf-}you can do all this--^{wf-}you can join the struggle against hunger, ignorance, suffering, poverty, injustice and war--^{wf-}you can do all this and still fail in our Christian mission. Two thirds of the world's people, after two thousand years, still do not know and believe the good news that Jesus Christ is the only Lord and Saviour.

Put very simply, the Christian world mission is what it always was. It is to break through any barrier that separates any part of the world from Jesus Christ to tell the good news about Him in every possible way, to anyone who will listen.

Don't give up that Mission for Lent. "If God so loved us that He gave his own Son to die for us, we also ought to love one another".

8/19/2001

1

MISSION HAS TWO LEGS

"...(Christ's) gifts were...for the equipment of the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ...so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine... Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ..." (Eph. 4:11-15).

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Today (in the year 2001) they tell me, if the statistics are correct, that there may be as high as 1 Christian in every 3 or 4 Koreans. From one in 1000, to 1 in 3 or 4. No wonder people speak of church growth in Korea as "the Korean miracle". And growth at the seminary, from 2 to about 2,500. Those are good reasons for us to celebrate on our hundredth anniversary. But I am not going to preach about success in mission in terms of numbers.

Growth in numbers is important when each addition means a new Christian.

My text from Paul's letter to the Ephesians doesn't have a single number in it. The apostle has a better measure than numbers by which to judge success. In a beautiful passage in the fourth chapter about the church as the body of Christ, he describes its mission as "speaking the truth in love..." (Eph. 4:15). He is talking about the different vocations in the church: apostles (which literally means missionaries), evangelists, pastors, teachers. Then he turns to how they are to put their calling into practice--the values and attitudes that make the calling effective. And he does not begin with growth. That comes later. The first values he mentions are truth and love, "speaking the truth in love".

Mission has two legs. Even the Great Commission in Mark (16:15-18) can be described in those two words: Truth, the Evangelistic imperative, "Go...and preach" (proclaim the truth), and Love, the Service imperative, "Heal the sick" (Mark 16:18). To have a Christian mission, the church needs both, for without those two legs mission doesn't move.

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were lost. No one had ever told them that they could live forever in Christ. Faced with a challenge as simple as that the Church exploded into the modern missionary movement, a race against time and against the devil for the greatest of all prizes, the eternal salvation of the human soul.

If I've over-simplified that summary description, forgive me, but that is basically the classic, and to many people the most familiar, theology of missions. It is evangelical mission: preaching the transforming truth that salvation is free for all, but only in Christ. It is the foundational message of the Christian mission. And if you are expecting me to ridicule it, I am going to disappoint you.

It was my parents' theology. The good news is true: "whoever believes in Jesus will not die, but live forever" (John 3:16). And it is the theology of most Korean churches today. (Among Korean Presbyterians) it is a theology which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. But it is not just Presbyterian; it is the theology of the vast majority of the churches of the third world. Who are we Americans to call them ridiculous? They're the ones who are growing, not we.

In fact that is also the theology which sent me to China, then ~~back to~~ Korea, and sent one of my brothers to India, and two of them into the ministry in America, and another as a medical missionary to Korea. This is how it happened to me. One day in Princeton's Miller Chapel, the chairman of the Board, Robert E. Speer, was speaking. At one point he stopped, took out his watch, and said to us, "Young men, this watch could tick for nine and a half years without numbering the unbelievers in China alone". So I went to China. I couldn't get that picture out of my mind. Nine and a half years without numbering the lost in that huge country which in the next hundred years could well come to dominate the whole continent of Asia, if not the world.

Still today, that theology of the lostness of unbelief, and of salvation in Jesus Christ alone sends more missionaries

around the globe than any other theology of missions. Why? Because it is true. That is the first ^{leg of the mission} answer. Jesus said it himself, "I am the way, and the truth, and no one comes to the Father but by me". (John 14:6). That is the best kind of missionary theology. but it is only one leg of the Christian mission. And mission needs another leg to walk.

II. The second leg is love. You know as well as I that some 70 years ago there came a day of the shaking of the foundations, the theological foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternal any more. So the missionary challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said, "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ".

It was a shift of balance, really, more than a denial-- a strategic withdrawal, they thought, to what was considered firmer theological ground. Millions upon millions are living in misery and in filth. No one can deny that. No one has ever given them a chance. No one has ever helped them to the life abundant that Jesus came to give them. This was a challenge to a future in history--a future without hunger and without hate, without sickness and without tears where all men are brothers, and all women are sisters, where justice rolls down like the waters, and the nations shall study war no more.

It gave us a second theology of missions, more modern, more practical, more "works" centered than "grace" centered--a theology of the Kingdom. In its most popular form it is a theology of liberation. It has its weaknesses. Sometimes it seems to want the kingdom without the King. But I do not intend to ridicule this view either. It has never seemed ridiculous to me to feed the hungry and to heal the sick and to work for peace and justice. Jesus who said, "I am the truth..." also said "I came not to be served, but to serve."

But again, you know as well as I how the paralysis of

doubt struck once more. The foundations shook, and the roof fell in. Wars, holocausts, depressions, brutalities, corruptions, AIDS, drugs and failed revolutions--all this in a disheartening crescendo of defeat. Worst of all, much of this was happening in the "Christian" west, in what too many had believed was the Kingdom, western civilization. That kind of a Kingdom somehow refused to stay built no matter how hard the liberators tried, and the builders began to lose hope. Have we lost that leg of the mission too?

Those have been the two familiar descriptions of the missionary: on the one hand, the saver of souls, the evangelist, and on the other, the builder of the Kingdom, the social activist. The problem of missions today is that neither the evangelist nor the activist has proved to be able by himself or herself to carry the whole church together into mission. Critics of the left still caricature the evangelical promise as too otherworldly--"pie in the sky by-and-by". And critics from the right even more devastatingly point out that the "paradise-here-and-now" activism of yesterday's failed revolutions has given us more hell on earth than hope of heaven. But a Biblical Christian mission needs two legs, both truth and love, for it takes love to make the truth credible to those who do not believe. How do we learn to bring the two legs together?

III. The answer to that is my last point in this sermon. The Christian mission needs more than the two legs--truth and love, evangelism and service. It needs a head. Paul knew that. His complete verse did not stop with "speaking the truth in love..." He continues with this all-important phrase, "... grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ" (Eph. 4:15b). What he is saying now is "The two legs need a head". They need the Lord Jesus Christ, the Head of the church. To the Philippians Paul says much the same thing, in a different context as "having the mind of Christ" (Phil. (2.2). The legs are useless without a head, for it is the mind, not ours, but the mind of Christ that can make the legs work together.

Our predecessors, the pioneers in mission and in the churches of Korea, knew that. They preached Christ, but while they were preaching, they opened schools and hospitals; they helped improve agriculture, they worked for justice; they laid foundations for the liberation of women, the handicapped and the oppressed; and the churches they planted have planted others all around the world. And all the time they proclaimed the good news: Jesus saves. For the mind of Christ was in them, and the love of God and neighbor was in their hearts, and the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth (John 14:17-18 John 5:6), came to give power to the truth.

I think that in Korea, this gift of the "mind of Christ" to the Korean churches is most clearly seen in what has been called the "Korean Pentecost", the Great Korean Revival of 1907. It's great leader was Pastor Kiel Sun-Ju, who graduated that year in the first graduating class of this seminary. He combined to an unusual degree the gifts of truth and love in the mind of Christ. He was a flaming evangelist of the truth; but he is just as well known as a patriot, who loved his country so well that he was imprisoned for demonstrating against Japanese imperialism. He is famous as one of the 33 signers of Korea's Declaration of Independence in 1919. And it is no coincidence that from that same first graduating class of this seminary came the Presbyterian Church of Korea's first missionary, Yi Ki-Poong.

Yi Ki-Poong is also famous as the man who stoned my father, back in the 1890s when in one year father was driven out of Pyongyang six times for trying to establish a base for mission there. Fifty years later, a committee from America came to ask my father, "What made the Korean church grow so amazingly?" He gave them a very simple, incomplete, but very true answer. He said, "For fifty years we have lifted up before these people the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit has done the rest."

But that was almost seventy years ago. Fifty years from now, will we be able to say the same? Will they ask us what we have done for Christ in mission for fifty years? I'm thinking

of North Korea. I was born there. Think what has happened there in the last fifty years. The church has almost disappeared. I will probably not be able to go back. But by the grace of God, you may, some of you. I pray that in the next fifty years, before this new century ends you will see a new Korea, a Korea united north and south, and a great new missionary challenge as the barriers fall. And before you rush in, I pray for a new Pentecost in Korea, like Jerusalem 2000 years ago, like the Great Korean Revival. And when that glad day comes, I pray that some of you sitting here may be able to say, "We will speak the truth in love, and once again let the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit do the rest".

So go north, go south, go out into all the world. Walk on both legs and have one mind, the mind of Christ, because Jesus is the truth, and God is love, and the Spirit is power... and.. your mission is not finished.

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Samuel Hugh Moffett

I am thrown back, therefore, to a yet more primal level of motivation for mission: not love, but obedience. I must quickly add, obedience in love. C.S. Lewis once observed in his pithy way, "[We] do not fail in obedience through lack of love, but have lost love because [we] have never attempted obedience."¹

Of course love is fundamental, love as the New Testament describes it. It is still "the first and greatest commandment". But was love the motive in the original mission of the church?

It was love that started the mission. Yes. "For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that everyone who believes in him might not perish but have everlasting life." (NRSV). But that was the love of God the Father. The missionary was God the Son.

But surely, the Son came on his mission with no less love than that of the Father who sent him. Yes, I believe that. However, it is interesting to note that the Bible does not say so. The life of Jesus on this earth was filled with love. His was a compassion that knew no bounds. He loved the publicans and sinners, Jews and Gentiles, unbelievers as well as those who believed. That is all true. But where are we told that he came into the world because he loved it? Insofar as the Bible distinguishes between the Son and the Father (a dangerous distinction, I know, and one which slips easily into heresy)--but so far as it does distinguish between those two persons of the Trinity in reference to the mission, it tells us that the Father founds the mission because he loves; the Son goes on the mission because he is sent. He obeys. The motive of the Son, the missionary, is obedience.

Look at the rare glimpse Paul gives us into the mind of Christ before the mission of his incarnation. The lesson is not

¹ Quoted by Chad Walsh in C.S. Lewis, the Visionary Christian, (NY: Macmillan, 1981), 83 f.

love, but humility and obedience, obedience "even unto the death of the cross" (Phil. 2:5-8). He loves the world, of course, but he goes because he is sent. That is the only explanation Jesus gives of the narrowness of his mission, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). He loves the world enough to die for it but he goes to the cross because he obeys: "Not my will but thine be done" (Lk. 22:42). The insistent, compelling motive of the mission is obedience. God is love; but it is obedience that forges and focusses and incarnates that love into a mission.

The lesson is the same when we turn to the apostles, the first missionaries of the church. Was it love for a despised and rejected race that sent Philip to the Ethiopian? Not according to the record. "The angel of the Lord spoke to Philip and said, 'Arise and go'.." (Acts 8:26). And he went. Was it love that sent Peter to the proud and unclean, the Roman centurion? Not according to the record. "The Spirit said to him, 'Arise and go..'" (Acts 10:20). And he went.

Was it a passion for millions of lost Gentile souls dying without hope and without Christ in this world that made Saul into Paul "the apostle to the gentiles"? He loved his own people, the Jews, too much for that, as the record shows. It was obedience that made him a missionary. "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them," said the Spirit (Acts 13: 2), and obedience sent him almost reluctantly to the Gentiles. In the "strange new world of the Bible" (Barth), apostles and missionaries are made not by looking at the world in love (though that they must do), but in the most basic sense, by listening to God in obedience. They go in love, or they should not go at all. But they go because they obey.

IV. At this point most of us are inclined to change the subject in embarrassment and wish we could go on to more practical missionary matters than theology--things like techniques, and methods, and cross-cultural relations, and fund-

raising appeals. How can we wait around to listen for the voice of God, when there is a whole world out there that needs to hear the good news and see it practiced.

I remember an incident back in my college days. This story, I admit, won't sound like most colleges today. One of the young women, earnest and intense, desperately wanted to go as a missionary to Africa. But God had not called her, she thought. There were no voices, no visions, only this inexplicable silence on the part of God. It was making her almost ill with anxiety. So one night a tough-minded, realistic, practical-joking friend of mine stepped in to take a hand. She gathered a group of girls together, robed them all in white sheets, and at midnight they stole into the troubled girl's room, moaning in hollow tones, "Come to Africa; come to Africa."

Don't laugh at the poor girl waiting for the voice of God. She was partly right, but partly wrong. Wrong in her stereotyped notion of how God ought to speak to her, but completely right in believing that without the positive assurance of God's leading, she would never be a missionary even if she did go to Africa. And don't rush to condemn the practical jokers, either. They were wrong to pose as substitutes for the voice of God, a temptation not unknown also among preachers and professors. But they were right that God does in his own mysterious way, choose to work through imperfect human means. Especially in missions. That is why our theology is so important. It keeps us on the right way. We are only dressing up in white robes and stealing in upon the unwary with false guideposts and lesser challenges if we settle for anything less than truth, love, and through it all obedience, according to the Scriptures.

Two years ago we had a surprise call. A Korean pastor whom we did not know, from the Sangdo Presbyterian Church in Seoul with which we were not familiar, wanted to fly us down to Chile for the groundbreaking of their new missionary project of which we had never heard. They told us that the church was celebrating its 25th anniversary, and wanted to celebrate it by undertaking a missions project in Chile. Why Chile?, we

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MISSIONS: A Tale of 2 Theologies

~~WHY MEDICAL MISSIONS?~~

~~Why in the world do we need medical missions? Or for that matter..~~
~~any kind of missions? The two questions belong together.~~

I. There was a time--back before the great theological depression in the mainline churches-- there was a time when Christians didn't feel the need to re-examine or re-imagine the world Christian mission every three or four years. They didn't need to ask why they had missionaries, and what missionaries were supposed to do. It was axiomatic. It was simple, and dangerous, and overwhelmingly urgent. It was as simple as the command of Christ, and as urgent as life and death. For millions upon millions were dying without Christ. Every second saw more souls slipping into a Christless eternity. No one had ever given them a chance. No one had ever told them that they could live forever in Christ. Faced with a challenge as simple as that the Church exploded into the modern missionary movement, a race against time and against the devil for the greatest of all prizes, the eternal salvation of the human soul.

That may over-dramatize it a little, but that is the classic and to many people the most familiar theology of missions. It is evangelical, salvationist theology. And if you are expecting me to ridicule it, I am going to disappoint you. It is not just outdated, old-fashioned 19th century mission theology. It was my father's theology of missions, for one thing, but more important than that, this same theology is the theology of 20th century Korean Presbyterianism which gains three or four times more members every year than Presbyterians in America lose every year. In fact, it is the theology of the vast majority of the churches of the

third-world, and who are we to call them ridiculous? They are the ones who are growing, not we.

I must also tell you that in large measure, that was the theology that sent me to China and one of my brothers to inner city America, and another brother to India, and still another into medical missions not all that long ago.

This is how it happened to me. One day in Princeton's Miller Chapel, the chairman of the Board, Robert E. Speer (for whom Speer Library gets its name) was speaking. At one point he stopped, took out his watch, and said to us (we were all men at the seminary then), "Young men, this watch could tick for nine and a half years without numbering the unbelievers in China alone".

That theology of the lostness of unbelief, and of salvation in Jesus Christ alone still sends more missionaries around the world than any other theology of missions, except perhaps in our shrinking, no longer "mainline" Protestant denominations. In our well-insulated circles, most Presbyterian do not realize that the number of foreign missionaries sent out from North America every year is growing, not declining. And I do not intend to ridicule a theology that still sends out missionaries.

II. But you know as well as I that there came a day of the shaking of the foundations. The old urgencies were denied, or at least ignored. No one seemed sure of anything eternal any more. So the challenge changed. The 1928 Jerusalem Conference of the International Missionary Council said (~~if you will excuse their language~~) "Our fathers were impressed with horror that men should die without Christ; we are equally impressed with horror that they should live without Christ".

It was a shift of balance, really, more than a denial--a strategic

withdrawal, they thought, to what was considered firmer theological ground. Millions upon millions are living in misery and in filth. No one can deny that. No one has ever given them a chance. No one has ever helped them to the life abundant that Jesus came to give them. This was a challenge to a future in history--a future without hunger and without hate, without sickness and without tears where all men are brothers, and all women are sisters, where justice rolls down like the waters, and the nations shall study war no more.

This is the second theology of missions, more modern, more practical--a theology of the Kingdom. In its most popular form it is a theology of liberation. I do not intend to ridicule this view either. It has never seemed ridiculous to me to feed the hungry and to heal the sick and to work for peace and justice.

But again, you know as well as I how the paralysis of doubt has struck once more. The foundations shook, and the roof fell in. Wars, holocausts, depressions, brutalities, corruptions, AIDS, drugs and failed revolutions in a disheartening crescendo of defeat. Worst of all, much of this was happening in what too many had believed was the Kingdom, western, ostensibly Christian civilization. The Kingdom refused to stay built no matter how hard the liberators tried, ~~and~~ the builders began to lose hope.

Those have been the two familiar symbols of the missionary: on the one hand, the savers of souls, the evangelist, and on the other, the builder of the Kingdom, the social gospeller. The problem of missions today is that neither pattern has proved to be able by itself to carry the whole church with it to the Mission.

Critics of the left still caricature the evangelical promise as "pie in the sky by-and-by" theology, and critics from the right with even more devastating effect point out

that the "paradise here and now" of yesterday's failed revolutions has given us more of hell on earth than hope of heaven.

III. So what do we have left as a motive for missions? In this kind of a world, and in our kind of a church, where can we find a compelling reason and motive for a Christian world mission?

It might help if both the unfairly caricatured saver-of-souls evangelists, and the much-criticized social action builders of the kingdom, each took one step backward for a better start, and then another step forward to a deeper more Biblical theology. In the Bible the evangelist can no more save souls than the social activist can build the Kingdom of God. Souls are saved by the Holy Spirit, and only God can build his Kingdom.

But instead of condemning them, let us admit that both are right in so much of what they are doing. The evangelist must proclaim; and the social reformers must try to make the world better. And, in a way, the evangelist and the reformer are actually not all that much different in their basic motivation. At their best, both honestly believe that their motive is love, Christian love.

Love, however, has lost its meaning in today's post-Christian world. America's culture-captive theologies use the word "love" in such a warm, loose, fuzzy way that I am beginning to question just how far we can use that word any more to describe our motivating base in Christian mission. Some even in the church, confuse it with erotic love! And that throws me back to a yet more primal level of our mission: not love but obedience.

C. S. Lewis once observed in his pithy, pungent way, "[We] do not fail in obedience through lack of love, but have lost love because [we] have never attempted obedience." Lewis was right. We need them both. Love and

obedience, evangelism and service, the doctor and the preacher, they belong together.

So let me ~~take advantage of our presence here in a conference on medical missions~~ to suggest that in a very timely way the whole history and theology of the ~~medical~~ mission enterprise is a living example of one way in which we Presbyterians have managed to bring the two symbols, evangelism and social witness, together in Christian mission.

It was precisely how Jesus went about his own mission. He came preaching, says the Bible. He also came healing. His preaching was as explicit and as dogmatic and as exclusive as any of the 19th century missionary theology with which I started this lecture. It was Jesus, not the missionaries, who said, "I am the way and the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but by me". (John 14:6). That is why he died on the cross. There is no other way. But his healing was just the opposite. It was inclusive--as compassionate and inclusive as any 20th century social gospel. But that is not the whole story. Even in his preaching there was inclusiveness of love; and to his healing, he set limits. He preached to anyone who would listen, and wanted everyone to believe. So should we. And the limit to his healing was the need for faith. He did not heal everyone. Neither can we.

So also with the apostles. They preached and they healed. Their preaching was as exclusive as their Lord's. Peter said very clearly to the Sanhedrin, "This Jesus Christ of Nazareth...There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved". (Acts 4-12). No other name--not Zeus, not Sophia, not Buddha, not Muhammad. No other name. But in Jesus' name they healed, wrote Luke the Doctor in his Acts of the Apostles, and they preached to all who would listen.

In Christian mission the evangelist and the doctor belong together, like Luke with Paul. So also in church history. The earliest mention of a medical missionary I have found so far in my study of the History of Christianity in Asia after the apostles, was Bishop Marutha of Maipherquat in the fifth century. On a mission to Persia he won the confidence of the Persian Emperor Yazdegerd by healing him of a fierce headache which all the court's Zoroastrian wise men, the magi, had been unable to cure. (Moffett, History of Christianity in Asia, I: 153).

We think of William Carey as 'the father of modern missions', but the man who preceded him in India, and who persuaded him to go to India, and went back to India with him, was a medical missionary, John Thomas. Thomas was a zealous evangelist as well as an effective ship's surgeon, but I regret to report he was no administrator. As treasurer for Carey, he bankrupted the mission, and it was Carey, a tentmaker missionary paying his own way, who had to rescue it by winning a well-paying appointment as professor in India's first college. (Moffett, II: chapter 10). Modern missions began with this integrated linkage between the witness of the Word, the evangelist, and the witness of service, the doctor.

We think of Adoniram Judson as the hero of Burma, the pioneer of the gospel in that strictly Buddhist land, and the apostle to the wild tribes of the hills who now form the highly successful base for Christian growth in Burma. But Judson might never have lasted more than a year or two in that anti-Christian land had not a medical doctor, Jonathan Price, joined him and won the favor of the Buddhist king by his healing skill. Judson was utterly ignored at court when the king summoned Dr. Price to an audience and Judson accompanied him. For several days the king eagerly questioned the doctor about his healing skill, until one day, he asked, "Who is this man in black standing there with you". Only then,

thanks to the doctor, did Judson finally manage to get a word in about the gospel. And for the doctor's sake, the king allowed the Christians to stay in Burma.

Or take Korea, the "miracle of modern missions", it is called. When my father landed in Korea 104 years ago, 25 years after the fiercest persecution in Korean history had killed some 10,000 Catholic Christians, there were only between 200 and 300 Protestant Christians in the whole peninsula, north and south. There were only two little churches, both in the capital, one Presbyterian and one Methodist. Today there are 12 million Protestants in South Korea alone. From 300 to 12 million in only two generations. More than half of those 12 million are Presbyterians. There are more Presbyterians in Korea than in the United States. And they are growing, while we are declining.

The statistics are staggering. Presbyterians started in Switzerland with John Calvin, but the largest single Presbyterian congregation in the world is not in Switzerland, but in Seoul, Korea. 60,000 members in one congregation. Methodists started in England, with John Wesley, but the largest Methodist congregation in the world is not in England, it is in Seoul, Korea. 30,000 members. Pentecostals, as a modern movement, started in Southern California, but the largest Pentecostal church in the world is not in California, it is in Seoul, Korea, over 400,000 members!

And how did that miracle of missions begin? With a medical missionary. The first resident Protestant missionary was a tall, balding, physician from Ohio, a Presbyterian, Dr. Horace Allen. The miracle began with a doctor, not an evangelist. The evangelization of Korea is another example of the shared partnership in mission spread over 110 years of Korean Protestant missions, between the evangelists and the doctors and nurses, joined by educators, agriculturalists and many other kind of missionaries who went about like Jesus healing and doing good. of 110 years of Korea Protestant Missions.

But now let me, for a change of pace, retell that Korea story. Let me show it to you with pictures for the next ten minutes. These pictures all came from a family album, so if my father pops up in them too often, let me make very clear that the Korea miracle was no one-man show. It was teamwork by a very remarkable group of men and women from four different kinds of Presbyterianism:

*Northern + Southern - Canadian + Australian all working together to build up
Korean Presbyterian Church.*

SLIDES

when his practical-minded wife intervened. "You can't send them back. They're a gift from the king. You can't insult him that way." "But what will I do with them?", Dr. Allen protested. "Train them as nurses", said his wife, which is exactly how the royal hospital, the Christian hospital, got its first women nurses.

So the doctor was first into Korea, then the evangelist. But they belong together. As if they knew that, two of the earliest evangelistic missionaries, Underwood and Moffett, both married medical doctors. That is really close integration of the two necessary ingredients of Christian mission: witness and service, proclamation and healing.

A story told of the first Mrs. Underwood illustrates how effectively the healing ministry prepared the way for the preaching of the good news of salvation. They say that the village elders of a small Korean town down-river from Seoul heard that foreigners had come to Seoul who said they had come to help the people. "How are they helping?" the elders asked. Well, they talk about how their religion can help us, they were told. "We already have three religions," said the elders. "We don't need any more. Stay away from them. Don't let them come down here." But they are nice people; they even have a place where they take care of the sick. "They're doing that for themselves," said the elders. "It's the way they get merit in their religion. They don't want to help us. They want to earn more merit." But on second thought, the elders decided to send one villager up to observe the strange people from overseas and check if they were in earnest about wanting to help.

So the man came up to the city, and went around to the hospital. Mrs. Underwood had been working night and day to save the life of an old Korean man. He watched her. "For merit," he thought. But early the second day, despite all her efforts, the poor man died. And Mrs. Underwood, exhausted, sat down on the edge of his cot, and wept. And the man went back to the village. "It's not just for themselves," he told the elders. "They really do care about us Koreans. I saw the doctor cry when the old man died." It was no accident that village became one of the strongest Christian centers in the countryside around the capital.

I would like to say more about how the joining together of medical and evangelistic mission is of the very essence of the Christian mission all through history and all over the world, but I cannot even continue the Korea story. Time forbids telling of Avison and Underwood at Yonsei; of the Wilsons and the witness of Southern Presbyterian missions to lepers; of the Cranes, and the Seels and the

Scotts and my own brother, Howard. Patients converted in just one of the Presbyterian hospitals in Korea went back to their home villages and actually started 142 new churches in the 30 years that Howard was in Taegu.

Our own reunited but still dividing denomination here desperately needs a stronger symbol of our unity than organizational connectionalism. It could borrow from mission history its symbol of unity in mission, evangelism and service. It needs both the evangelist and the humanitarian working together in Christ. Of course the evangelism must be more than the counting of church members, and of course the humanitarianism must be more than the secularized, failing attempts at self-improvement of an unbelieving world. That is not where a theology of mission begins. It begins with truth, love and service. And it demands obedience.

Let me close with an illustration from the wave of the future in Presbyterian world mission: third-world Presbyterian missions. Two years ago Eileen and I had a surprise call from Korea. A Pastor Kim Lee-Bong whom we did not know, from the Sangdo Presbyterian church in Seoul with which we were not familiar, wanted to fly us down to Chile for the groundbreaking of a new missionary project of which we had never heard. The church was celebrating the 25th anniversary of its founding. "Let's focus our celebrations on missions," they said, and everyone agreed enthusiastically. "But how should we begin?", they asked. Well, someone said, "Jesus said, 'Go into all the world, to the uttermost parts of the earth, didn't he?" So they got a globe map of the world, and stuck a pin into where they were, Korea, and stretched a string around the world to its farthest side. It turned out to be Chile. When they found out that there were already some Korean evangelistic missionaries in Chile, they said, "The first missionaries who came to us from America had doctors. Let's make our project a medical mission. And that was what we were invited to attend, the groundbreaking of a Korean Presbyterian Hospital for the Mapuche Indians around Temuco in southern Chile.

I hope you will remember two theological lessons from these vignettes of the history of missions in general, and Korea in particular. Lessons from two Korean Presbyterians, Yi Keui-Poong in 1907 at the Korean Presbyterian church's first Presbytery meeting, and Pastor Kim Lee-Bong of the Sangdo Presbyterian church today, 90 years later. The first lesson, from 1907: "A real church has missionaries." The second lesson from 1994, "A real mission has doctors and nurses and hospitals". We need both. We need a World Ministries Unit in Louisville, and at the grass roots the splendid work of the General Assembly's validated initiative in mission, the Medical Benevolence Foundation. And with

both of them working together, the Good Lord might even see fit to help us keep our beloved denomination from splitting once again.

Samuel Hugh Moffett
Bryn Mawr, PA
April, 1994